

Corps and Fort Hood, and his wife, Cindy; Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, USA, commanding general, 1st Cavalry Division; Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, USA, commanding general, 4th Infantry Division, and his wife, Dee; CSM Thomas O. McMurtrie, USA, command sergeant major, U.S. Army Garri-

son, Fort Hood; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; President Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Transitional Government; and Hajim al-Hasani, Speaker, Iraqi Transitional National Assembly. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring the 2005 Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots April 13, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome. Well, back again. [*Laughter*] I was thinking that Coach Belichick was so comfortable coming to the Rose Garden that he might just wear one of those designer sweatshirts. [*Laughter*] I'm a little disappointed. [*Laughter*] I'm glad to see you own a tie, though.

I want to welcome—

Head Coach Bill Belichick. Is this a roast? [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes. I want to welcome the Krafts back. Congratulations once again. Obviously, this club has got fine ownership, and you know how to run a team. Welcome back.

And obviously, you know how to coach. I'm pretty impressed with the way you handle yourself. I think some of us involved in the political arena could spend a little time getting tutelage on how to handle the mike like you do. [*Laughter*]

I want to welcome members of my Cabinet who are here. Thank you for coming. Alphonso, I thought, like, you're a Cowboy fan or something. What are you doing here, you know? [*Laughter*]

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Alphonso Jackson. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Oh, thank you, sir.

The Secretary of Agriculture is with us.

We appreciate so very much Senator Kennedy and Senator Kerry. Welcome. Marty Meehan—I'm glad you all are here. Thanks for coming. I'm surprised more of

the delegation hasn't come, but, you know, Red Sox one week, Patriots the next—it's getting to be old hat here. But glad you all are here.

Tedy Bruschi, it's good to see you. I congratulate you on showing such incredible courage on the field and off the field. There's a lot of people that were praying for you, I know. And I'm glad you're feeling good, and I'm glad you're back. You look great.

I want to welcome all the staff, the coaches who are here. Last time I didn't pay much attention to the managers and the people passing out the equipment, so I'd like to pay special tribute to the people who do all the work in the locker room and probably never get recognized except by the players, who love you. So welcome to the White House, and welcome to the Rose Garden.

I want to say a special welcome to all the Patriots fans from around the DC area. I see some from New Hampshire who have come as well, and Boston. And you're welcome. Glad you're here. You're honoring a team that showed a lot of heart.

You know, the commentators would say, well, they're not the flashiest bunch; they're not the fanciest bunch; they just happen to be the best team. They're the team that showed that when you play together, when you serve something greater than yourself, you win.

I'm sorry your fieldgoal kicker is not here. You're probably sorry you didn't have to use him this year to win. But I do wish Adam all the best with the birth of their second child. He has got an excused absence.

One of the things about this club is you set a lot of records. You know, in sports, they always talk about, records are made to be broken. Let me talk about some of the records of the New England Patriots. In back-to-back championship seasons, you've won 34 games. That's a record. You've won nine straight playoff games, which ties a record. The coach has the best playoff record in league history. This is a club that has won 20 games in a row in the home park. If you're going to win 20 games, it's probably good to do it in your home stadium, you know. It tends to make the fans want to come back—doesn't it, Marty?

I appreciate the inspiration you've shown for the region—inspired the Red Sox. I think the Patriots have also inspired the Celtics. But whatever is happening in New England, it's a pretty strong sports record, anchored by the great New England Patriots, champs 3 out of 4 years.

And so, welcome back. We're glad you're here. I want to thank you for what you've done off the field. I did so the last time you were here; I want to do it again. I want to thank you for the importance that you've shown for education and literacy. I appreciate the example that you've set for kids. I want to thank you for working in youth football. I want to thank you for supporting the Boys and Girls Clubs of Massachusetts. There's nothing better than encouraging mentoring to help save a child's life. And as a pro football champion, you have an opportunity to do just that.

I appreciate Larry Izzo. He went to Rice, as I understand it. Is that right? Yes, Rice University in Houston, Texas. Guess what he did? He went overseas to the USO—the Pat Tillman USO in Afghanistan. And I want to thank you for doing that. Is it Izzo or “Eyezo?”

Linebacker Larry Izzo. Izzo.

The President. Yes. Well, if you're from Texas, you say “Eyezo,” and if you're from—[laughter].

Mr. Izzo. It sounds good to me.

The President. If you're from Massachusetts, it's Izzo. At least I got Rice right. [Laughter]

I also want to thank you all for going by Walter Reed and the National Naval Medical Center here in Washington. I think you saw firsthand the definition of courage when you saw those young soldiers who had been wounded that are working hard to overcome their injuries. I can assure you that your visit helped lift their spirits. There's nothing better than a Super Bowl champ encouraging somebody to continue to work hard to recover. And I want to, again, thank you for that. Thank you for your example.

I once again welcome you back. You know, I think I said last time there's a chance you'll be back. I wasn't sure about me. [Laughter] I'm confident I'll be back next year—[laughter]—and the way you've been playing, there's a good chance you will be too. Congratulations, and welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Kraft, chairman and owner, Jonathan Kraft, vice chairman, Tedy Bruschi, linebacker, and Adam Vinatieri, kicker, New England Patriots.

Remarks at the American Society of Newspaper Editors Convention and a Question-and-Answer Session

April 14, 2005

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks, Rich. I appreciate the chance to come back—more than you know. [Laughter] I miss my hometown newspaper. Austin was my hometown newspaper for quite a while. I miss reading it every morning as it was thrown on the Governor's Mansion doorsteps, but not enough to want to stay here for 4 more years. [Laughter]

I appreciate your leadership, Rich. Two thoughts came to mind when I first saw Rich. One, he has to work with a guy named Ken Herman. [Laughter] Is Herman in the pool today?

Ken Herman. Yes, sir, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, okay. [Laughter] Just trying to help you out—[laughter]—kind of like you try to help me out, you know what I mean? [Laughter]

And second, I know Rich is proud of his son, Rich, Jr., who is in Baghdad. My daughter Barbara—one of our daughters went to Yale, and she brought a fellow over the other day. I said, “What are you doing?” He said, “Well, I was in your daughter's class. I'm in Baghdad, and I'm working with the State Department to help shepherd the press corps.” I said, “Oh, who are some of the characters you've run into there?” And he mentioned a guy named John Burns, who I had known when my dad was the liaison officer in China. And believe it or not, he mentioned Oppel. I said, “I know the old man.” [Laughter]

I know you're proud of him. I appreciate the service he's providing.

And I want to thank Karla Garrett Harshaw as well, from Clark County, Ohio. Happens to be one of my favorites. [Laughter]

Just a couple of brief thoughts, and I'd be glad to answer some questions if you have any. [Laughter] Here's what Jefferson

said. Jefferson said, “Our liberty depends on freedom of the press; that cannot be limited without being lost.” He also went on to say, “I've given up newspapers, and I find myself much happier.” [Laughter]

I haven't given up newspapers. I do find myself much happier than I've been in a long time in Washington. I'm enjoying myself. It's been a fascinating experience to be the President of the country. It's been a remarkable time in Washington. You know, as Rich said, the last time I was here we were talking about the EP-3. It seems like an eternity ago. A lot has happened.

Somebody said, “Well, how do you describe the Presidency?” I said, “It is a decisionmaking job. I make a lot of decisions.” At your next editorial board, when you're dealing with a future President, you ought to say, “How do you intend to make decisions? What is the process by which you will make large decisions and small decisions? How do you decide?”

I've got a decision to make today. Do I go with the fastball or a slider? [Laughter]

A couple of thoughts about this year and the agenda, and then questions. First, we've got a problem with energy. And it's a problem that didn't happen overnight. It's a problem that's been brewing for quite a while because the country has yet to implement a strategy that will make us less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I was at Fort Hood the other day and sitting, having lunch with some soldiers, and the second question that the fellow asked me was, “Why don't you lower gasoline prices?” I said, “I'd like to.”

You see, the problem is, the supplies are out of balance with demand when it comes to the major feedstock of gasoline, which is crude oil. We've got to think long term in this country, and Congress needs to pass